

the living Impoverish themselves in order
to enrich the
dead.¹

The Oraons or Uraons of Bengal feast their dead
every Annual
year on a day in January. This ceremony Is called
the ^dea
Great Marriage, because by It the bones of the
deceased among
are believed to be mysteriously reunited to each other.
The Bengal.
Oraons treat the bones of the dead differently
according to
the dates of their death in the agricultural year.
The bones
of those who died before the seeds have sprouted
in the
fields are burnt, and the few charred bones which
have not
been reduced to ashes are gathered in an
earthen pot
With the bones in the pot are placed offerings of
rice,
native gin, and money, and then they carry the
urn to
the river, where the bones of their forefathers
repose. But
the bones of all who die after the seeds have
sprung up
and before the end of harvest may not be taken
to the
river, because the people believe that were that to
be done
the crops would suffer. These bones are
therefore put
away in a pot under a stone near the house till the
harvest
is over. Then on the appointed day In January
they are
all collected. A banquet Is given In honour of the
dead, and
then both men and women form a procession to
accompany
the bones to their last resting-place In the sands of
the river.
But first the relics of mortality are carried from
house to
house in the village, and each family pours rice and
gin Into
the urn which contains the bones of Its dead. Then
the pro-
cession sets out for the river, men and women
dancing,
singing, beating drums, and weeping, while the
earthen pots
containing the bones are passed from hand to

hand and
 dance with the jiggling steps of the dancers. When
 they
 are yet some way from the spot, the bearers of the
 urns run
 forward and bury them in the sand of the river.
 When the
 rest come up, they all bathe and the Great Marriage
 is over.²

¹ Rev. Win. Pettigrew, "Kathi" Rev. P. Dehon, S.J.,
 "Religion
 Kasham, the ⁴ Soul Departure ' feast and Customs of the Uraons,"
Memoirs
 as practised by the Tangkul Nagas, *of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*[^]
 vol. i.
 Manipur, Assam," *Journal and Pro-No.* 9 (Calcutta, 1906), p. 136.
 Com-
ceciHngs of the Asiatic Society of Ben-pare Rev. F. Harm, " Some
 Notes on
gal, N.S. vol. v. 1909 (Calcutta, the ^Religion and
 Superstition of the
 1910), pp. 37-46; T. C. Hodson, *Qr^JJ^ Journal of the*
Asiatic Society of
The Naga Tribes of Manipur (London, *J3eii\$al*, lxxii. Part iii. (Calcutta,
 1904)
 1911), pp. 153-158. pp. 12 sq. According to the latter